

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

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H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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DRAFTED BY EA/ROC:CWFREEMAN,JR.:BDS

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A/OPR/VS - MR. BELL (SUBS)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI PRIORITY

INFO USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 095657

E.O. 11652: GDS

TA,S: PFOR, TW, CH

SUBJECT: PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

REF: TAIPEI 2455

1. RESPONSE TO GROC DEMARCHE ON DEPARTMENT'S BICENTENNIAL EXHIBITION SHOULD BE MADE AT EITHER POLITICAL COUNSELOR TO DIRECTOR, NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS OR DCM TO VICE FONMIN CHIEN FU LEVEL. (CHIEN IS OUR PRIME SUSPECT AS AUTHOR OF GROC PROTEST.)

2. YOU SHOULD REITERATE THAT THERE IS NO POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE TO BE ATTACHED TO THE EXHIBIT. EXHIBIT IS WIDE-RANGING, DOES NOT FOCUS ON SINO-AMERICAN RELATIONS, AND THEREFORE CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO DEAL WITH THEM IN DETAIL. WE ARE SATISFIED THAT IT IS AS FAIR AND ACCURATE DEPICTION AS POSSIBLE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF TWO
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HUNDRED YEARS OF AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC HISTORY GIVEN THE

LIMITATIONS INHERENT IN SUCH A SWEEPING EFFORT. DEPARTMENT DOES NOT RPT NOT INTEND TO MODIFY THE EXHIBIT FOR SEVERAL REASONS: (A) ATTEMPT TO MODIFY EXHIBIT WOULD ATTRACT CONSIDERABLE PUBLICITY AND TRANSFORM LOW-KEY APOLITICAL EVENT INTO CONTENTIOUS CHINA POLICY ISSUE, WHICH WOULD NOT BE IN INTEREST OF EITHER USG OR GROC; (B) MODIFICATION OF EXHIBIT AT REQUEST OF ONE COUNTRY

RISKS SETTING AN UNDESIRABLE PRECEDENT FOR THIS AND ANY OTHER SIMILAR USG ACTIVITY; (C) GROC OBJECTIONS APPEAR TO BE BASED UPON MISINTERPRETATION OF INTENT AND CONTEXT OF PICTURES AND QUOTATIONS IN QUESTION.

3. IN PRESENTING ABOVE YOU SHOULD STRESS THAT WE DO NOT ACCEPT ROC INTERPRETATION OF IMPORT OF PICTURE ON CHINESE CIVIL WAR. THIS PICTURE IS IN PANEL COVERING MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD, AND ACCOMPANIES TEXT READING: " COMMUNIST MOVEMENTS MADE MAJOR ADVANCES IN ASIA AFTER WORLD WAR II. IN 1949 THE NATIONALIST FORCES UNDER CHIANG KAI-SHEK WERE EXPELLED FROM THE MAINLAND BY CHINESE COMMUNISTS UNDER MAO TSE-TUNG." IN DEPARTMENT'S VIEW, FEW AMERICANS WOULD DISAGREE THAT THIS WAS ONE OF THE MAJOR POST-WAR DEVELOPMENTS WHICH HAD GREAT INFLUENCE ON US FOREIGN POLICY. NOR WOULD MANY DISAGREE WITH THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EVENTS CHRONICLED IN THE CAPTION UNDER THE PICTURE OF THE NIXON-MAO MEETING: "IN 1972, NIXON AND NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER KISSINGER TRAVELED TO CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION TO SEEK BETTER RELATIONS."

4. WE FURTHER NOTE THAT ROC EMBASSY AND WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENTS APPARENTLY OVERLOOKED TEXT IN PANEL COVERING THE 1950'S WHICH READS "DURING THE 1950'S THE US FACED REPEATED CRISES IN THE FORMOSA STRAITS. UNDER CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORIZATION IN 1955 TO USE ARMED FORCES IN DEFENSE OF TAIWAN, THE US 7TH FLEET IN 1958 CONVOYED SHIPS TO QUEMOY AND MATSU." TEXT IS ACCOMPANIED BY PICTURE CAPTIONED: "PRESIDENT EISENHOWER SIGNS THE BILL GRANTING HIM AUTHORITY TO EMPLOY TROOPS IN 1955."

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